nature net

The **Nature***Kenya* Newsletter * www.naturekenya.org * July 06

the ruin of Lake Naivasha

by Isaac Ouma

Tues 16 July '06

at the Louis Leakey Hall, Nairobi Museum

Isaac Ouma was born and grew up in Naivasha. His talk is a unique eye witness account on the unsustainable exploitation of Lake Naivasha. He will take you through a pictorial presentation on the decline of this Ramsar site and explore some possible alternatives to achieve a sustainable solution.

Isaac is a trained wildlife manager and currently a student of Global Ecology and Wildlife Conservation at Leicester University.

Temples, Tigers, Tombs and Tandoori

1st - 17th December '06

with Dr Patrick Benson (In conjunction with Nature Safari Ltd, India)

Join Dr Patrick Benson (world's authority on vultures) in his expedition to savour India's wildlife and culture in the heart of Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.

Cost $ 2950 per person

for more detail go to page 3

shop news

what's new and available at the Nature Kenya membership and sales office

- **Bush Friendly Tips for Girls (and Boys too!) @ 950/-**
- **Important Bird Areas Status and Trends 2005 @ 450/-**
- **Tanzanian Mushrooms @ 2000/-**
- **Fieldguide to the Damelsflies of South Africa @ 2100/-**
- **Fieldguide to the Dragonflies of South Africa @ 1900/-**

JULY AT A GLIMPSE

Sat 8	Tree Walk
Sun 16	Sunday Birdwalk
Tues 18	Talk on L. Naivasha
Mon 24	Tree Walk

Birdwalks every Wednesday Morning

Athi River

Sat 5 - Sun 6 August '06

overnight Wanafunzi Lodge, Hopcraft Ranch

Wanofunzi Lodge is situated in a small acacia forest on a ranch looking towards Lukenya, with plenty of plains game and bird life. We will do a walk and visit Simon Thomsett's falconry. Also possible from here ore day and night game drives.

The lodge is about 6 kms from the main road and about 45 minutes from Nairobi depending on the traffic. There is no problem with the road on the ranch except during the rains then a 4 X4 vehicle is recommended.

Local Resident Rate at Wonafunzi is 3500/- per person sharing full board or 4000/- for a single.

Mbweha Camp, Nakuru

For the special offer to Nature Kenya members call **Mbweha Camp offices** tel. 3877776 or 0722 782997 (Offer valid until 31 August 2006)

Direct Debit!

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To receive a Direct Debit authorizing form, please write to Nature Kenya or send a note to office@naturekenya.org

Discussion Forum

make your opinion known at www.naturekenya.org/forum

Plan to register a friend or relative as a *member!*

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action

Bio-energy

dream or nightmare for biodiversity?

Bio-energy is a term used to describe energy derived from organic materials—living plants and plant components. Crops grown for bio-energy include traditional crops such as wheat, but also dedicated energy crops, like sugarcane, unusual grasses and forestry products.

The production of bio-energy is gathering more and more attention as a feasible way of reducing dependence on imported oil and gas and is even being hailed as one of the potential key weapons in the battle against global warming.

Is it really green?

The great appeal of bio-energy is that it is theoretically a renewable source of energy. Crops can be converted to energy either by being processed into liquid fuel for the transport sector (biofuels) or by being burnt in power plants (biomass). With combustion, carbon dioxide (CO_2) is released. Because the fuels are derived from biological material, the carbon released on combustion comes from CO_2 absorbed by plant material through the process of photosynthesis. Effectively, producing energy from biofuels or biomass could be seen as 'recycling' CO_2.

However, this rosy picture is over-simplistic. Bio-energy production is never a neutral process when it comes to "greenhouse gases". During production, processing and transportation of the crops there are many other inputs to consider. Fossil fuels are used to power tractors for working the land; fertilizers and pesticides are needed to grow the energy crops. One of the most potent greenhouse gases, N_2O, is released from fields that are intensively fertilized, and a lot of energy is needed to convert the crop into fuel. In fact, life-cycle analyses of bio-energy production have shown that with poor management methods, production can actually result in a net increase in the emission of greenhouse gases.

Bioenergy crops could replace natural habitats

It is not only the carbon balance of bio-energy production that is worrying: growing bio-energy crops to boost incomes and provide some new rural opportunities...is very important for rural communities, but this should not be at the expense of habitats within the agricultural landscape which are important for nature.

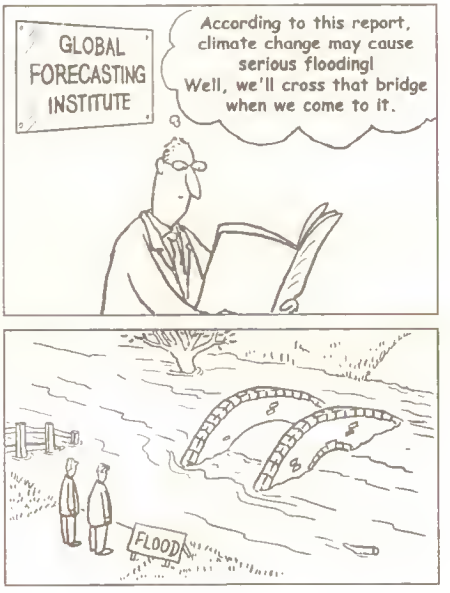
Some of the most promising crops for producing biofuels are oil palm and Soy, two rapidly expanding tropical monocultures which are amongst the chief causes of tropical deforestation. A huge surge in demand for biodiesel could drive even further the large scale clearing of forests in key biodiversity hotspots such as Indonesia or the Brazilian Cerrado. The Indonesian Government has just announced plans to clear three million hectares of forest to create palm oil plantations dedicated to biodiesel production. Losing such large areas of precious habitat will serve a death sentence to threatened bird species like the Sumatran Ground-cuckoo and also threatened mammal species such as the Orang-utan.

This is an extract from an article which first appeared in the March 2006 issue of BirdLife's World Birdwatch *magazine.*
By **Sara Sharpe**

TBA Funding Database

www.tropical-biology.org

The Tropical Biology Association has just launched a funding database to assist African conservation biologists find scholarships, fund their research projects or finance training opportunities. The database is a web-based directory of over 185 sources of MSc or PhD scholarships, fellowships, internships, project funding, training opportunities, travel grants and volunteerships. It was developed as part of the TBA follow-up support programme for its course trainees and is now available to the wider African conservation community. To sign up to the funding database, please visit the TBA website: www.tropical-biology.org


GLOBAL FORECASTING INSTITUTE
According to this report, climate change may cause serious flooding!
Well, we'll cross that bridge when we come to it.
FLOOD

For more Chris Madden cartoons buy his book "The Beast that ate the Earth" from his website www.chrismadden.org

Petition to Protect Canada's Far North from Climate Change

Hello everyone! Nature Canada (Nature Kenya's BirdLife Partner in Canada) is encouraging all of our friends and colleagues to participate in a petition to protect Canada's Far North from Climate Change We're asking the federal government to do more to protect the polar bear's habitat and slow the effects of global warming in Canada's Arctic

The petition is part of a new web site Nature Canada has launched that introduces Charles and Roger, two polar bears who want the rest of the world to see what's happening to their home. Go to http://charlesandroger.com/" — watch the video, listen to the audio interview between Charles the Polar Bear and our conservation director Mara Kerry — hear what Charles and Roger have to say and sign the petition!

natural history

EVENING SKY

Ian Mackay & Fleur Ng'weno

Moon, July 2006

July 4th - Moon occults Spica: The first-quarter moon, directly overhead at sunset, passes between the Earth and the bright star Spica; July 11th - Full Maan; July 17th - Last quarter Moon; July 25th - New Moon

Planets, July 2006

Earth is mast distant from the sun on July 4th (this is knawn as 'Aphelion'). This is one reason why July is the coldest month of the year near the equator.

The planets Mercury, Saturn and Mars appear in a neat raw over the sunset in the first week of July. Mercury is tiny, and visible for about two weeks close to the western horizon. Saturn, between Mercury and Mars, is the brightest of the three, and getting lower in the sky. Mars is the highest; above it is the star Regulus in the constellation of Leo the lion.

Across the sky, Jupiter is a bright light in the east. Venus remains low and bright in the morning twilight, appearing closer to the horizon as this month goes by.

July Stars

Arcturus, a bright arange-yellow star, is high above, a little to the narth. Belaw it in the narth is the canstellatian af the Plough - three stors in a line followed by four stars forming the corners of a box shape. The bright blue-white star Spica is also high above, but a little to the sauth.

The Milky Way, a cloud-like shape made up of millions of stars, stretches across the eastern sky from south to north. Several constellations, or patterns made by bright stars, can be seen across the Milky Way. In the southern sky: the Sauthern Cross, now leaning to the west; the two bright stars of the Centaur; and Scorpius like a giant fishhook. On July 8th, the star Antares (the Scorpion's red eye) is just narth af the moon.

In the nartheast there is the brilliant white star Vega, low in the sky and just outside the Milky Way; and Aquila the eagle with its bright star Altair flanked by two smaller stars, rising in the east. The small constellatian of the Dolphin, one of Ian's favourites, rises below Altair shortly after sunset.

THE 1ST KENYA FORESTRY SOCIETY SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE AND AGM AUGUST 10th -11th 2006, Nakuru

CALL FOR PAPERS

The Kenya Forestry Society is calling for papers with the theme **'Kenyan farestry in the new millennium and the challenges facing a forester under the Forest Act no 7 of 2005'**

Abstracts for this conference should be submitted by July 7th, 2006. For more details on submitting an abstract please email: keforsoc@yahoo.co.uk or write to Box 30513-00100, Nairobi Kenya.

travel to India from page 1

On this educative expedition that commences from Delhi, you will float along the Chambal river near Kata, observing the birdlife before reaching the Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve. Thereafter, you will experience the Mughal cultures of Agra's Taj Mahal and Lal Qila (Red Fort); and the quaint 16th century village of Orchha where vultures nest on its historic temples. Finally, you will end your expedition in India's leading Tiger Reserve, Bandhavgarh National Park, a rich wildlife area with a central plateau and fort dating 2000 years.

The expedition will include lectures and talks about India's wildlife, the Vulture crisis, and techniques used in field ecology and conservation.

For the provisional day-to-day itinerary please email office@naturekenya.org

The expeditian daes NOT include:

1. International or Domestic Airfare
2. Elephant Safari in Bandhavgarh as subject to availability and the price for the same is **14USD per persan**
3. Camera fee at monuments and National Parks
4. Any expenses af personal nature like, smokes, liquor, laundry and telephone calls
5. Tips ar gratuity

Baaking and Payments Deadlines: **15 September 06**
Cancellation fees apply: 30 - 2 1 days prior to date of trip 20% af cost; 20 - 14 days 50%; less than 14 days 100%

You will need to organize your own travel insurance, visa and air ticket

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Up & about

DECLARATION

Nature Kenya does not accept any responsibility whatsoever in respect of negligence of any of its staff, volunteers or members organising the outings/trips or for any loss, injury, death or damage to property.

WEDNESDAY MORNING BIRDWALKS

Bird watching walks at sites in and around Nairobi. Meet at the National Museum car park every Wednesday at 8:45 a.m. Return about 12:30 p.m. *Those who are not members can get temporary membership at Ksh 100 per birdwalk, payable on arrival at the car park.*

TREE WALKS

Guided tree walks in the Arboretum on the second Saturday and last Monday, i.e. **8** and **24 July '06** from 9:30 a.m. Meet at the Arboretum gate. *Those who are not members of FONA or Nature Kenya pay Ksh 100/- fee on arrival at the gate.*

SUNDAY BIRDWATCH

Members meet at the National Museum, Nairobi car park at 9:00 a.m. the third Sunday of every month, **i.e. 16 July '06.** The members decide where to go. Bring lunch

BIRD RINGING

Meet at the Museums' Nairobi Botanic Garden, at 7:00 a.m. every Thursday.

SAMAKI DAYS *New!!

Guided fish excursions on the first Thursday, i.e. **6 July '06** from 9:00 a.m - 12:30 p.m. Meet at the Nairobi Museum car park. *Pay Ksh 50/- per person on arrival*

KINANGOP GUEST HOUSE

Perched on the Kinangop Plateau with incredible views across the Rift Valley, the farm combines tussock-grass pasture, indigenous forest, and attractive gardens. The guesthouse is comfortable and fully furnished. Visitors can enjoy hikes and walks on the farm or go further afield with local guides.

For more information, brochure and non-member rates please contact Nature Kenya. Guest House rates: Day visit 350/-

MEMBER nos	Overnight	Weekend
1 to 2 pax	4000/-	6500/-
3 pax	4,900/-	7,400/-
4 pax	5,800/-	8,300/-

20% OFF ACCOMMODATION AT THE DRIFTWOOD

On presentation of your membership card, you con get this discount off accommodation (if paying by cash or cheque) at the Driftwood Beachclub. This is a charming beachfront property with great food ond service. Contact: <gm@driftwoodclub.com or tel 042 20155

Ngong Road Forest Walks

Ngong Road Forest Sanctuary Trust nature walks held the first and third Saturdays of the month i.e. **1 & 15 April '06, at 9:00 a.m.** Meet at the stairs leoding to the Restauront at the Racecourse. Call Anthony Chalo to confirm on 575207 or 0733 712406.

Lake Victoria Sunset Birders (Kisumu)

The Lake Victoria Sunset Birders organise bird walks at sites in and around Kisumu every Friday of the month. For further details call 057 42952 or 0734 994938 or email lakevictoriasunsetbirders@yahoo.co.uk

Mt Kenya Biodiversity Conservation Group (MKBCG)

The MKBCG organise bird walks to sites around Naro Moru every last Saturday of the month i.e. **29 July '06.**

For more information contact 0722 364904, 0733 937115 or 062 62071 Email: mt_kebio@yahoo.co.uk_

Birding at Kinangop

Friends of Kinangop Plateau organise birdwalks every third Friday of the month i.e. **21 July '06** at 9:00 a.m around Magumu and Njambini areas. To participate contact Bakari Ng'ang'a on 0721 470215

MARURA NAROK BIRDWATCHERS

A community group neor Uaso Narok Swamp, Rumuruti, which organises birdwalks every lost Saturday *i.e.* **29 July '06**. Call 062 32718 or email olmaisor@africaonline.co.ke

ARABUKO-SOKOKE (COAST)

The Saturday birdwatch with the Arabuko Sokoke Forest Guides Association is on the first Saturday of each month i.e. **1 July '06, at 6:30 a.m.** from the Visitor Centre, Gede. Cost 100/- per person. KWS fees now apply (100/ Citizens, 500/- Residents)

FFJ Bird Walk (Coast)

Friends of Fort Jesus birdwalks are held the third Saturday of each month, i.e. **15 July '06**.Please call Marlene Reid on (041) 491 648 to confirm

NatureKenya

Yes! ☐ *Start* ☐ *Renew*

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(OPTIONAL - but useful to us in planning)

Occupation

Age Bracket (tick) under 21( ) 21-35( ) 36-50( ) over 50( )

Country of Origin

Would you like us to share your contacts Yes/ NO

For Official Use Only Sub No. Recpt. No.

Mode Due Date Recpt Date

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Corporate	10000	
Corporate Plus	20000	
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Journal of E.A. Natural History	1000	
Scopus (Ornithological Journal)	500	
World Birdwatch (the BirdLife International magazine)	1500	
Succulenta East Africa	400	
Friends of Nairobi Arboretum Single - 400/-, Student - 250/-, School or Club - 800/-		
African Bird Club (Student 500/-)	800	
DONATE & ***Help us to do even more!***	5000/Other	
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